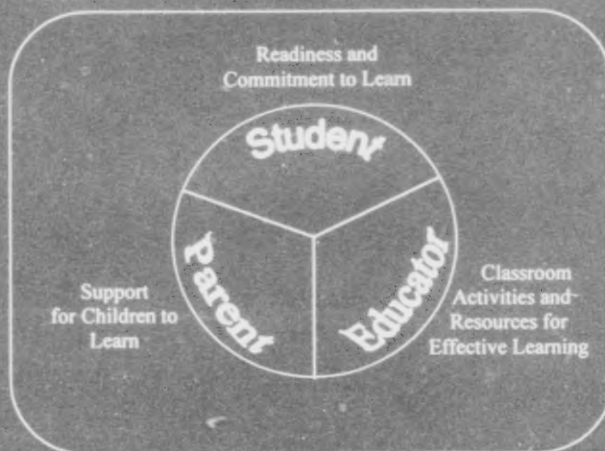


Saskatchewan Opportunities to Learn Related to Reading and Writing

Opportunity to Learn – A Shared Responsibility



January 1999



Saskatchewan
Education

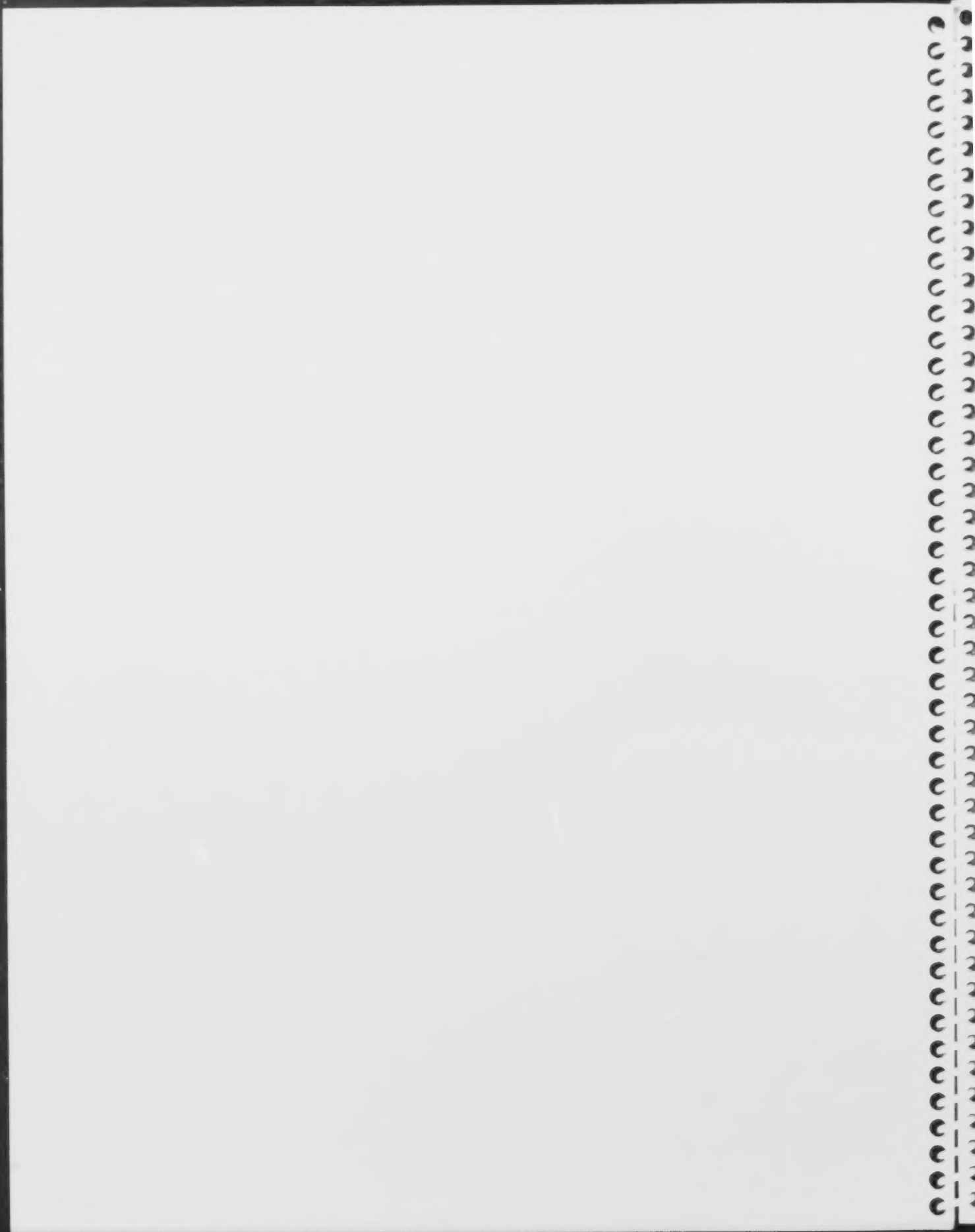


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Introduction

Reading and writing are powerful means of communicating and learning. They enable students to extend their knowledge and use of language, increase their understanding of themselves and others, and experience enjoyment and personal satisfaction.

How do we create opportunities for students to develop good reading and writing skills toward such purposes? To what extent have students experienced these opportunities? Have Saskatchewan students had sufficient opportunities to become effective readers and writers? The 1998 School Achievement Indicators Program (SAIP) Reading and Writing Assessment provides information to foster discussion around such questions.

In May 1998, a representative sample of about 1800 Saskatchewan students at each of ages 13 and 16 completed tests in either reading or writing, developed through the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada. These students, chosen from 200 schools situated in urban, rural, and northern settings, also completed questionnaires to describe their attitudes, practices, and opportunities related to reading and writing. This report focusses on questionnaire findings about students' opportunities. Student achievement outcomes are reported in the *1998 School Achievement Indicators Program Reading and Writing Report*.

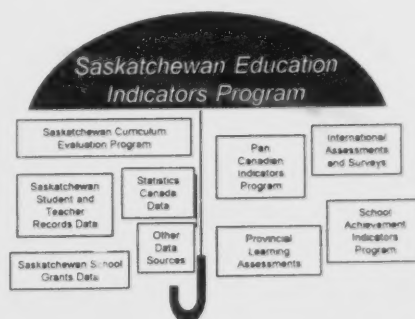
All 13- and 16-year-old students were eligible to participate in this nation-wide testing, regardless of their background and enrolment in language arts. Students' motivation to do well and to consider carefully their responses on the questionnaire depended on such intrinsic factors as personal satisfaction and provincial pride. Results are reported only at a provincial level. Individual students, classrooms, schools, or school divisions are not identified.

To decide whether students have sufficient opportunities to become effective readers and writers, stakeholder representatives were invited to set standards and expectations. This invited group of teachers, parents, directors, trustees, professors, and business persons:

- considered the context of the assessment;
- discussed the classroom and home experiences of Saskatchewan 13- and 16-year-olds; and,
- reflected on the students' actual questionnaire responses.

Also in May 1998, about 2000 Grades 5, 8, and 11 students in 90 Saskatchewan classrooms participated in a provincial listening and speaking assessment. Student opportunity and achievement in listening and speaking are reported in the *1998 Provincial Learning Assessment in English Language Arts (Listening and Speaking) Report*. These provincial and national assessments provide information for the Saskatchewan Education Indicators Program. The Indicators Program draws data from many areas to create a comprehensive picture of the province's K to 12 education system.

Figure 1: Information Sources for the Saskatchewan Education Indicators Program



Defining Students' Opportunities in Reading and Writing

Differences in students' learning experiences contribute to differences in outcomes. Affording opportunity for students to become effective readers and writers is a shared responsibility.

- Schools and teachers must create a safe, non-discriminating environment to support learning. They provide effective instruction using a variety of high-quality resources, and guided by good curricula.
- Students must show a commitment and readiness to learn. They become better readers and writers by reflecting on how they might enhance their skills, and by persisting to do their best work.
- Parents must support their children as they learn. They discuss academic progress and school experiences with their children, and model good reading and writing practices.

Two standard-setting panels, one for 13-year-olds and one for 16-year-olds, were convened. Using available questionnaire data, they considered:

- significant and useful reading practices;
- time spent reading in language arts class, reading for classes other than language arts, and reading for enjoyment and/or general interest;
- frequency of modeling reading in the home;
- significant and useful writing practices;
- amount of writing in language arts class, writing in classes other than language arts, and writing that is not school-related; and,
- frequency of modeling writing in the home.

For the most part, the standard-setting panels first established independent standards describing the amount of time, number of pages, or frequency that Saskatchewan 13- and 16-year-olds should experience related to a particular opportunity element. Once each standard was established, the panels set provincial expectations for the percentages of 13- and 16-year-olds that should have opportunity consistent with that standard.

The following sections describe students' opportunities to learn in light of these standards and expectations, first for reading and then for writing.

Opportunity-to-Learn refers to the conditions or processes of learning.

Outcomes, on the other hand, describe the products or results of learning such as demonstrating good reading and writing skills.

A total of 26 panelists set standards:

- 15 teachers/consultants from the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation
- 4 trustees from the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association
- 1 member from the League of Educational Administrators, Directors, and Superintendents
- 3 parents from the Saskatchewan Association of School Councils
- 1 University of Saskatchewan faculty member
- 1 Saskatchewan Indian Federated College faculty member
- 1 member of the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce

Opportunities to Become Effective Readers

Students' Knowledge of Significant and Useful Reading Practices

What are significant and useful reading strategies? Teachers, administrators, parents, and trustees discussed strategies students should know that contribute to adequacy and excellence in reading. The strategies or practices deemed to be most significant were:

- depending on knowledge and experience to make sense of what is being read
- re-reading parts that are not understood
- using contextual information to work out the meaning of unfamiliar words and expressions.

Other strategies considered useful in reading were:

- communicating with others about what is being read
- pre-scanning reading materials for their suitability
- looking up unfamiliar words and expressions in the dictionary
- skimming for specific information.

When responding to survey questions on these strategies, students identified that they used the strategy always or almost always, usually, sometimes, or never or almost never. A student who used the strategy at least sometimes must have knowledge of the strategy.

Figure 2: Percentage of Students Reporting Knowledge¹ of Significant and Useful Reading Strategies, Expected and Actual Results, Saskatchewan 13- and 16-year-olds, 1998 SAIP Reading and Writing Assessment

	<u>13-year-olds</u>		<u>16-year-olds</u>	
	<u>Expected</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Expected</u>	<u>Actual</u>
Significant Strategies				
Depend on knowledge and experience	96%	93%●	94%	93%●
Re-read parts that are not understood	96%	96%●	94%	97%▲
Use contextual information to work out meaning	96%	84%▼	94%	92%●
Useful Strategies				
Talk with others about what is read	87%	73%▼	89%	78%▼
Use table of contents, headings, summary to determine relevance	87%	85%●	89%	91%●
Look up unfamiliar words in the dictionary	87%	55%▼	89%	66%▼
Skim when reading for specific information	87%	91%●	89%	94%▲

¹ Knowledge of a strategy is indicated by use of the strategy at least sometimes.

▲ indicates use of the strategy exceeds provincial expectation

● indicates use of the strategy meets provincial expectation (within statistical margin of error)

▼ indicates use of the strategy is short of provincial expectations

Figure 2 and other analysis show that:

- For the most part, the numbers of Saskatchewan 13- and 16-year-old students who demonstrate significant reading skills and strategies are consistent with provincial expectations. However, fewer 13-year-olds than expected use contextual information to work out meaning while they read.
- The most frequently used significant reading strategy was re-reading parts of passages not understood. Four out of five 13- and 16-year-olds usually or always use this strategy.
- Fewer than half of 13-year-olds usually or always use contextual information to work out meaning while reading. Almost two-thirds of 16-year-olds use context clues this frequently.
- Both 13- and 16-year-olds met or exceeded provincial expectations for knowing how to use tables of content, headings, and summaries to determine what is relevant to read. About nine in ten students skim when reading for specific information, surpassing provincial expectations.
- Fewer Saskatchewan students than expected talk with others about what they read or look up unfamiliar words in the dictionary.
- 76% of 13-year-olds and 85% of 16-year-olds in the province report using all three significant strategies at least sometimes. 73% of the younger group and 84% of the older group use three or more of the useful reading strategies at least sometimes.
- In all cases, more females than males report using the significant and useful strategies. For example, 84% of female 13-year-olds compared with 64% of male 13-year-olds talk with others about what they read at least sometimes; and 60% use a dictionary at least sometimes compared to 50% of the males. These differences are similar in size for 16-year-olds.
- Slightly greater numbers of 16-year-olds than 13-year-olds report using the significant and useful reading strategies at least sometimes. This is true of both the female and male groups for these ages.

Sufficient numbers of Saskatchewan students:

- use experience to make sense of what they read
- re-read parts they don't understand
- use context clues
- skim for specific information
- use table of contents, headings, and summaries to determine relevance of the reading passage.

Fewer students than expected:

- talk with others about what they read
- look up unfamiliar words in the dictionary.

The Time Students Spend Reading

Students have opportunity to practise and develop reading strategies by spending time reading. A number of factors contribute to the amount of student reading time. Some of these include:

- the activities and structure teachers provide in the classroom
- the commitment and interest students bring to reading tasks in and out of school
- the encouragement and support parents offer.

The questionnaire asked students about the daily time they spend:

- reading orally or silently in their language arts class
- reading outside of class for all their courses other than language arts
- reading for enjoyment and/or general interest.

Teachers, administrators, parents and trustees first established a standard for the number of minutes students should usually spend reading daily for each of the three time elements. Figure 3 shows the expected percentage of students who should spend the standard time reading, and the percentage who actually spend at least that amount of time.

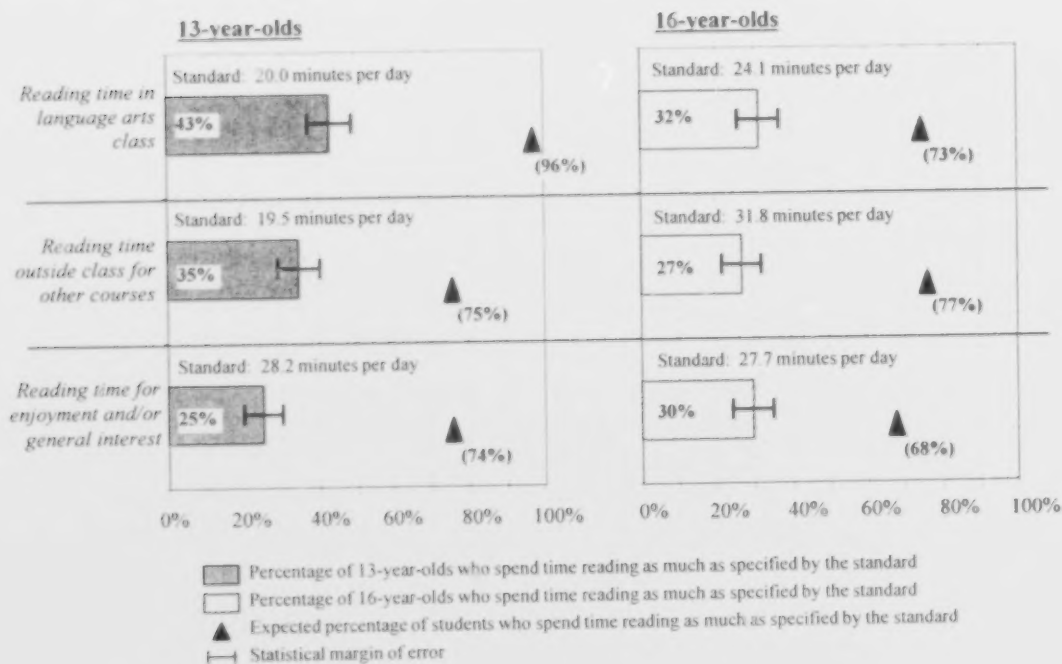


Figure 3 shows that:

- It is expected that 16-year-old students should spend more time than 13-year-olds each day reading in language arts classrooms and for other courses. The expected one-half hour each day reading for enjoyment is the same for both age groups.
- The total time most Saskatchewan students should spend reading in and out of school for various purposes rises from about 68 minutes per day for 13-year-olds to 84 minutes per day for 16-year-olds.
- Almost all 13-year-olds (96%) should have a structured opportunity to read in language arts class. In other reading contexts, about three-quarters of Saskatchewan students are expected to read as much as required in the standard.
- Most Saskatchewan students do not spend sufficient time reading each day for school and general interest purposes. In each instance, only one-third to one-half of the expected numbers of students actually read as much as required in the standard.
- More 13-year-olds than 16-year-olds meet the standards for school-related reading. The reverse is true for time spent each day reading for enjoyment and/or general interest.

Saskatchewan students do not spend sufficient time reading inside and outside the classroom. This is particularly true of males.

Figure 4: Percentages of Females and Males Spending Time Reading as Much as Expected and Those Spending No Time Reading, Saskatchewan 13- and 16-year-olds, 1998 SAIP Reading and Writing Assessment

	<u>13-year-olds</u>		<u>16-year-olds</u>	
	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>
Percentage who read as much as expected				
... in language arts class	32%	29%	37%	27%
... outside class for other courses	28%	20%	39%	21%
... for enjoyment and/or general interest	39%	24%	44%	27%
Percentage who spend no time reading				
... in language arts class	1%	12%	2%	19%
... outside class for other courses	12%	28%	16%	26%
... for enjoyment and/or general interest	15%	30%	13%	29%

Figure 4 shows that:

- More females than males read as much as expected. This was most evident in reading activities outside of the classroom, where 39% of females and 24% of males, aged 13, spend the expected time reading for enjoyment.
- At age 16, the gap between females and males increases for the required time spent reading inside and outside the classroom.
- The number of males who spend no time reading outside of class, for other courses or for enjoyment, is generally double the number of females doing so.

Modeling Reading at Home

Parents contribute to their children's reading practices and strategies through:

- giving direct guidance and discussing current readings
- providing reference and support materials
- modeling good reading attitudes and practices.

Fewer Saskatchewan students than expected see someone reading at home every day.

How often do students see someone in their home reading? How often should these students see someone reading at home? The standard-setting panels established that students should see someone reading at home virtually every day of the week. Figure 5 shows expected and actual percentages of students who benefit from daily modeling.

Figure 5: Reading Modeled Usually Every Day in the Home for Saskatchewan 13- and 16-year-olds, Expected and Actual Results, 1998 SAIP Reading and Writing Assessment

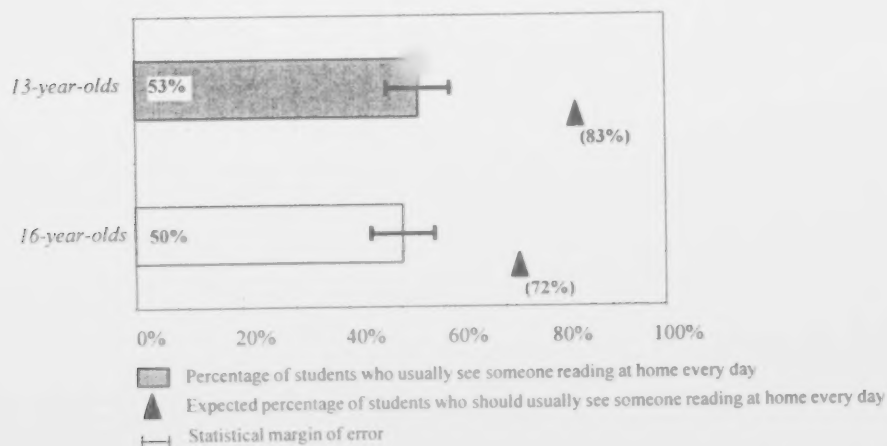


Figure 5 and further data analysis show that:

- About half of 13- and 16-year-old Saskatchewan students report usually seeing someone in their home reading every day. These numbers fall short of expectations.
- About 5% of 16-year-olds report never seeing someone in their home read, double the figure for 13-year-olds. Four of five 13-year-olds see someone read in the home at least a couple of times each week; 73% of 16-year-olds observe such frequency.
- For both age groups, males and females equally experience role modeling in terms of seeing someone reading in the home.

Opportunities to Become Effective Writers

Students' Knowledge of Significant and Useful Writing Practices

Teachers, administrators, parents, and trustees on the standard-setting panel also reviewed a number of strategies for writing. The strategies they judged to be significant and useful for students to know for developing writing excellence are shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Percentages of Students Reporting Knowledge¹ of Significant and Useful Writing Strategies: Expected and Actual Results: Saskatchewan 13- and 16-year-olds, 1998 S.M.P. Reading and Writing Assessment

	13-year-olds		16-year-olds	
	<u>Expected</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Expected</u>	<u>Actual</u>
Significant Strategies				
Talk to others about what they are writing	97%	81%▼	92%	78%▼
Revise and edit their writing	97%	88%▼	92%	88%▼
Useful Strategies				
Depend on knowledge and experience to find things to write about	85%	92%▲	84%	95%▲
Consult references for facts and information about their topic	85%	76%▼	84%	84%●
Write down ideas as they think about the assignment	85%	71%▼	84%	78%▼
Make a plan or outline before they start	85%	67%▼	84%	71%▼
Start writing without planning so they capture ideas	85%	87%●	84%	89%▲
Write several drafts of their pieces	85%	67%▼	84%	64%▼
Use writing tools like dictionaries or spell-checkers when they write	85%	80%▼	84%	84%●
Talk about their writing with their language arts teacher at different stages of the writing process	85%	57%▼	84%	55%▼
Talk with other students about their writing at different stages of writing	85%	68%▼	84%	60%▼
Share their writing with an audience or publish it	85%	46%▼	84%	36%▼

¹ Knowledge of a strategy is indicated by use of the strategy at least sometimes.

▲ indicates use of the strategy exceeds provincial expectation

● indicates use of the strategy meets provincial expectation (within statistical margin of error)

▼ indicates use of the strategy is short of provincial expectations

Figure 6 shows that:

- Fewer Saskatchewan 13- and 16-year-olds than expected know how to use significant and most other useful writing strategies.
- Both age groups were similar in their knowledge of strategies used when planning, processing, discussing and sharing their writing.

- Students met or exceeded provincial expectations for using their experience to find things to write about, and for pre-writing activity. Only two-thirds of the students ever made a plan or outline before they started writing.
- Although 88% of both age groups revise and edit their writing, just short of expectation, only two-thirds of them ever write several drafts of their work. The numbers who use dictionaries, spell-checkers, or consult references approach or meet provincial expectations.
- Saskatchewan students are less apt to discuss their writing with someone during development and fewer still share the finished product with an audience at least sometimes. Fewer than one-half of 13-year-olds and about one-third of 16-year-olds share their writing with an audience or publish it, well below the 85% expected to do so.

More Saskatchewan students require practical knowledge of significant and useful writing strategies.

For example, one-third of students do not write more than one draft when composing.

A more detailed analysis of student writing strategies shows:

- Almost three-quarters of 13- and 16-year-olds use both significant strategies (talk to others about what they are writing, and revise and edit their writing). About 95% of the students use at least one of these significant strategies.
- Although four out of five students at least sometimes talk to others about what they are writing, less than one-half of 13-year-olds and about one-third of 16-year-olds make this a regular practice.
- Fewer than 60% of Saskatchewan 13- and 16-year-olds regularly revise and edit their writing.
- The strategies most similarly employed by both females and males were to:
 - start writing without planning so they capture their ideas (age 13 and 16)
 - talk with the language arts teacher at different stages of their writing (age 13 and 16)
 - share their writing with an audience or publish it (age 16).
- More females than males are likely to:
 - talk to others about what they are writing (particularly, talk with other students)
 - write down ideas as they think about their assignments
 - write several drafts of their pieces
 - regularly revise and edit their writing.

Many Saskatchewan students do not regularly talk to others or make revisions during the writing process.

Females use a greater variety and frequency of writing strategies than those used by males.

The Amount of Writing Students Do

The amount of writing a student does is influenced by the readiness and commitment of the student, the instruction and organization provided by the teacher, and the encouragement and support given by the parent. Provincial standards are described in Figure 7 for the number of pages students should usually write each month:

- in their language arts class
- in all classes other than language arts
- in addition to school-related writing.

When establishing the standards, panelists decided that writing involves some original work (e.g., includes note-taking but not copying notes). They also decided that it includes pages written during different drafts and stages of writing, and not just the finished product.

Figure 7: Amount of Writing Students Do Each Month, Expected and Actual Results, Saskatchewan 13- and 16-year-olds, 1998 SAIP Reading and Writing Assessment

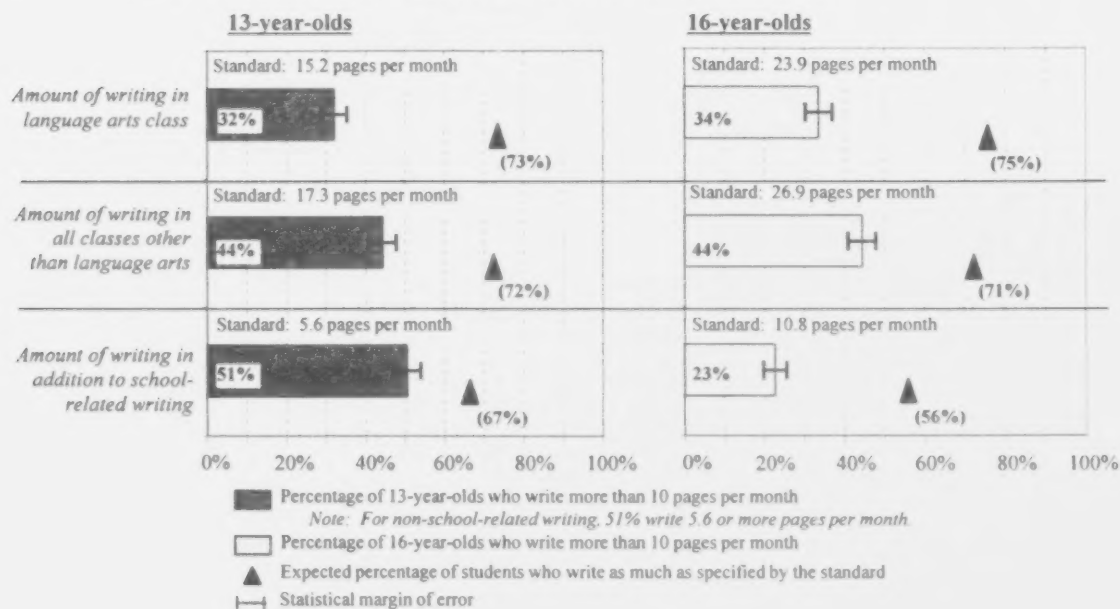


Figure 7 and further analysis show that:

- Saskatchewan 16-year-olds are expected to do significantly more writing than 13-year-olds. From age 13 to age 16, expected in-school monthly writing increases more than 50% and expected non-school-related writing almost doubles. In total, most 13-year-olds should write 38 pages per month and most 16-year-olds should write 62 pages per month.
- About one-third of students in both age groups write more than 10 pages per month in language arts classrooms, and 44% do so in other school classes; significantly fewer than expected to do so.
- While one-half of Saskatchewan 13-year-olds produce at least 5.6 pages of non-school-related writing per month, one-quarter of the province's 16-year-olds meet the higher 10.8 pages per month standard for such writing.
- For both age groups, similar numbers of females and males write more than 10 pages per month in language arts class and in all other classes.
- More Saskatchewan females than males engage in non-school-related writing. At age 13, three of five females and two of five males produce more than 5 pages of non-school-related writing each month. At age 16, females (29%) almost double males (16%) in producing more than 10 pages of such writing each month.

Most Saskatchewan students do not write as much as they should.

Females and males write similar amounts in school, but females are apt to write more than males outside of school.

Modeling Writing at Home

How often do students see someone in their home writing? Parents can model good attitudes and practices that demonstrate the importance of writing. This is emphasized each time students see someone at home writing (by hand or on computer) notes, letters, work- or school-related documents, or creative pieces for enjoyment and expression. Such modeling provides opportunity to discuss ideas for writing topics, explore useful writing strategies, and offer assistance during the writing process.

Writing is not modeled as much as reading is modeled in the home.

Figure 8 shows the expectations and results related to the frequency with which writing is modeled in the home.

Figure 8: Writing Modeled in the Home for Saskatchewan 13- and 16-year-olds, Expected and Actual Results, 1998 SAIP Reading and Writing Assessment

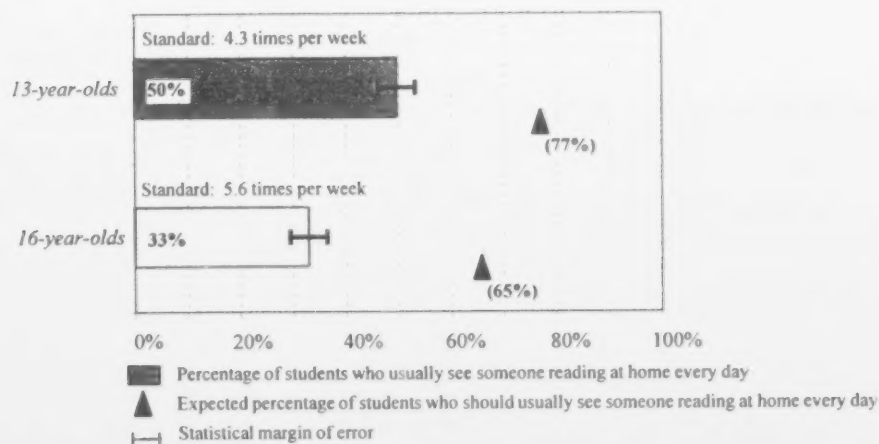


Figure 8 and additional data analysis show that:

- One-half of Saskatchewan 13-year-olds see someone writing in their home at least 4.3 times per week (six out of every ten days), short of the three-quarters expected to experience such levels of modeling.
- One-third of Saskatchewan 16-year-olds report writing is modeled in their homes 5.6 times per week (eight out of every ten days).
- Over 90% of 13- and 16-year-olds see someone at home writing at least occasionally. More 13-year-olds (64%) than 16-year-olds (56%) see such modeling at least a couple of times each week.
- Slightly more females than males report seeing writing modeled frequently in the home. This was most evident for 13-year-olds where 69% of females reported they saw someone write at least a couple of times a week at home, greater than the 59% of males reporting such.

Student Outcomes and Opportunities to Learn

In this section, student outcomes are compared for two groups: those with sufficient opportunity and those with insufficient opportunity, as defined for selected elements by the standard-setting panel. In each case, student outcomes shown are the percentages of students attaining Level 3 or higher (considered to be adequate performance for 16-year-olds and more than adequate for 13-year-olds).

The reader should not assume a causal relationship between the opportunity element and the achievement results. Nor should the reader assume an opportunity element as being unimportant if it does not closely relate to student outcomes. Opportunity elements represent relevant factors for enabling students to become effective readers and writers, not necessarily factors that predict student performance. There may be many moderating factors contributing to student outcomes in the assessment.

Reading Outcomes

There is a strong positive relationship between reading opportunity-to-learn elements and reading outcomes. The small numbers of students who never re-read passages they don't understand, achieved poorly, as a group, compared to those who do re-read such passages. Similarly, student outcomes were higher for the group who uses other significant reading strategies.

Figure 9 shows how students spending sufficient time reading performed compared to those spending insufficient time reading. On the graph, the length of the vertical line between the symbols represents the difference in the percentages of students achieving Level 3 or higher performance. Longer vertical lines are the result of greater achievement differences between the two groups.

Figure 9: Reading Achievement, by Time Spent Reading, Saskatchewan 13- and 16-year-olds, 1998 SAIP Reading and Writing Assessment

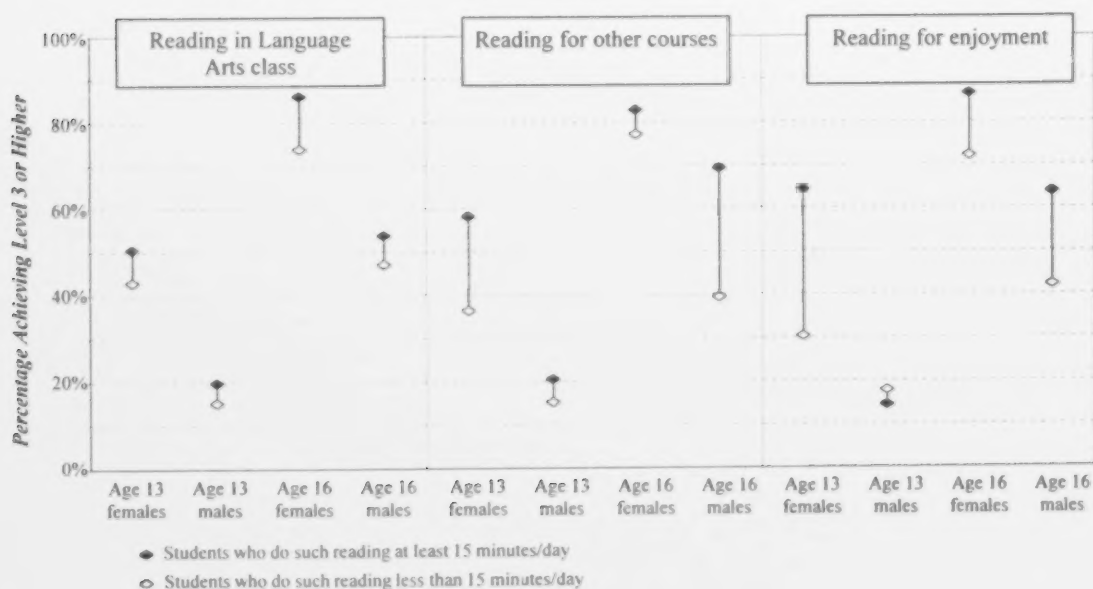


Figure 9 shows that:

- In each reading context, females who read at least 15 minutes per day, as a group, achieved higher levels than those who read less than 15 minutes per day. In all but one context, this trend was similar for males.
- Significantly more females than males achieved higher reading levels. In fact, the performance of 13-year-old females rivaled that of 16-year-old males, particularly for those females who spend sufficient time reading.
- Reading outcomes of 13-year-old females and 16-year-old males seemed particularly affected by the time they spent reading outside the language arts classroom.

Reading outcomes were higher for Saskatchewan students who use significant reading strategies. Those who spend more time reading, and receive sufficient modeling at home also achieved higher.

More students who usually see someone reading in the home every day achieved higher levels than their counterparts. For the age 13 group, 39% of the students with sufficient modeling and 30% of those with insufficient modeling achieved Level 3 or higher. For the age 16 group, these respective numbers are 67% and 57%.

For both age groups, female performance varied only marginally between those having daily modeling and those having less frequent modeling. Reading outcomes for males differed significantly related to how frequently they saw someone reading at home. For 13-year-old males, 28% experiencing daily modeling and 13% experiencing less than daily modeling achieved Level 3 or higher; these numbers increased for 16-year-old males to 57% and 37% respectively.

Writing Outcomes

The relationships between students' opportunities to become effective writers and students' writing outcomes are mixed. A positive relationship between the use of significant writing strategies and writing achievement is evident. Relationships between outcomes and the quantity of writing, and between outcomes and how frequently writing is modeled in the home are not apparent.

Writing outcomes were higher for students who use significant writing strategies. No clear relationships were apparent between outcomes and the amount of writing done by students.

Figure 10 provides greater detail of these relationships. It shows, for each opportunity element, the percentages of students attaining Level 3 or higher writing achievement within each group; one group with sufficient opportunity and the other group without.

Figure 10: Writing Achievement Related to Opportunity-to-learn Elements, Saskatchewan 13- and 16-year-olds, 1998 SAIP Reading and Writing Assessment

	13-year-olds		16-year-olds	
<u>Significant Strategies</u>	<u>at least sometimes</u>	<u>never</u>	<u>at least sometimes</u>	<u>never</u>
Talk to others about what they are writing	76%	58%	85%	80%
Revise and edit their writing	75%	56%	85%	75%
<u>Quantity of Writing per Month</u>	<u>more than 10 pages</u>	<u>10 or fewer pages</u>	<u>more than 10 pages</u>	<u>10 or fewer pages</u>
... in language arts class	69%	75%	85%	83%
... in all classes other than language arts	72%	73%	85%	82%
... in addition to school-related writing	71% ¹	74% ¹	83%	84%
<u>Modeling Writing at Home</u>	<u>usually every day</u>	<u>less frequently</u>	<u>usually every day</u>	<u>less frequently</u>
Number of times per week seeing someone write at home ...	77%	71%	84%	86%

Notes:

- Percentages shown in the table represent the percentage of the responding group achieving Level 3-5 writing performance. For example, 76% of 13-year-olds who at least sometimes talk with others about their writing achieved Level 3-5 performance, while 58% of 13-year-olds who never talk with others about their writing achieved Level 3-5 performance.

¹ These percentages (for 13-year-olds) show Level 3-5 achievement based on writing more than or less than 6 pages of non-school-related writing.

Figure 10 shows that:

- Students who talk to others about what they are writing and those who revise and edit their work showed higher achievement results than those who never use these significant writing strategies. This is particularly true for 13-year-olds.
- Thirteen-year-olds who usually see someone writing at home every day performed, as a group, better than their other classmates. This was not the case for Saskatchewan 16-year-olds.
- The quantity of writing inside and outside the classroom did not clearly separate students into distinctly performing groups. Differences were small and, in the case of 13-year-olds, were slightly to the advantage of students who wrote 10 or fewer pages per month in each setting.

Questions for Staff Reflection and Inquiry

1. Refer to Figure 2:
 - How many students in our school (classrooms) demonstrate these significant and useful reading strategies?
2. Refer to Figure 3:
 - What is the significance of this figure?
 - How would our students compare to the provincial profile? Would they meet the standards for daily time spent reading?
 - What implications might these findings have for how we structure class activity?
3. Refer to Figure 5:
 - In what ways can our school encourage parents to model reading for their children?
4. Refer to Figure 6:
 - What percentage of our students would report that they use the listed writing strategies at least sometimes?
5. Refer to Figure 8:
 - Should we expect parents to model effective writing in the home the same way we might for reading? How should we communicate those expectations?
6. Refer to Figures 4 and 9:
 - How can we ensure equality of opportunity for male and female students in reading and writing?
7. General Questions:
 - What are our classroom and school expectations for reading and writing skills and strategies? Do they match or exceed provincial expectations? Why or why not?
 - Do report cards in our school division show student progress in reading skills and strategies? Should they?
 - How might we encourage students to communicate more frequently about their reading and writing interests?
 - Do students in our school devote sufficient amounts of time to reading, writing, listening, and speaking?

